

## ONTENTS Ridiculous and Horrible Things I Learned Over the Summer Flailing Men My Rejected Submission to the Alumni Magazine An Open Letter to the Cereal Bins of SAGA A Bleeding Heart Us Raspberry Almond-Filled Muffins Fairy Tale, Revisited Circus Pictures 77777 Pictures A Thoughtful Comparison Journal Entries by Elementary School Children

## omen

Volume 25, issue 3 October 14, 2005 lavout & editing

Chapter Two

Ellen Dulaney	Head
Jacob Lefton	Shoulders
Molly McLeod	Knees
Stephen Morton	Toes
Abby Ohlheiser	Knees
Sarah Weiss	FUCK!
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Chris Byler THE OFFICIAL OMEN HAIRU: Back Cover by: Andrew Flanagan

Front Cover by:

New Layout by:

Molly McLeod

Views in the Omen

Daddy Long-Legs

Do not necessarily

Reflect the staff's views (5)

# to submit

Submissions are due Saturdays before 5 p.m. You can submit in rich text or plain text format by CD, and typed hard copies will also be accepted, reluctantly. Label your disks well and they will get back to you. Get your stuff to Abby Ohlheiser, Merrill C313, x4482. You may also use e-mail. Send e-mail submissions to awo03@hampshire.edu

And be sure to read our policy box at the bottom of the next page before submitting.

Visit the Omen's spankin' new website! omen.hampshire.edu

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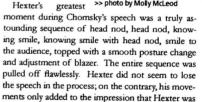
- Abby Ohlheiser, on finishing the Omen

## theomen $\cdot$ 03

## HEXTER PROVES HIMSELF BETTER AUDIENCE THAN PREDECESSOR Rangana

At the Noam Chomsky lecture on October 11, engaged intelligently in the ongoing speech 2005, Hampshire College President Ralph Hexter proved himself superior to former President Greg Prince in one of the major tasks of a college or university president. His poise in fulfilling his duty was truly exemplary.

the speech, all while maintaining a casual posture. Sitting alone on a stage behind a keynote speaker is truly one of the most daunting of Hexter's new tasks as Hampshire's president, and I don't think he left any doubt in his ability to fulfill it after Chomsky's speech tonight.



Hexter's position of choice was commendable. He did not sit completely upright, a position that may have conveyed discomfort. He sat halfway between band-practice perfect and back-of-the-class slouching, Gently spooning with his chair, Hexter provided himself with the comfort While Chomsky spoke, Hexter remained alert he would have experienced had he decided to pull the chair and engaged, nodding and smiling at key points in next to him closer and snuggled up, horizontal, to the soft

> blue fabric, without renouncing the dignity expected of a college president. The smile on his face declared to the world his victory: he has conquered both comfort and respectability. He is the Dockers of college presidents; he is the Dr. Schol's insole



in an otherwise uncomfortable dress shoe.

If I were to suggest one area for improvement in Hexter's performance, it would be to avoid looking at people moving in the aisles. Any good choir member knows that looking at distractions in the audience area big no-no. Hexter should be excused for this minor transgression due to his inexperience as a college president.



The Omen is Hampshire's longest-running biweekly publication, established by Stephanie Cole in December of 1992. In the past, submissions have included students' perspectives on the campus. administration, news, movie reviews, commentary, short fiction, satire, first born, artwork, comics, and the occasional embarrassing self-promotion. Everything the Omen receives, provided it is sent from a member of the Hampshire community, will be published unless it is deemed libelous or defamatory. Although we find such things amusing and entertaining for countless hours, it is just not an option in this forum. Libel will be considered clearly false or unsupportable writing that maliciously damages a person's reputation.

The Omen will not edit anything you write

(except spelling and grammar)

You must sign your real name (no anonymous submissions) and understand that you are responsible for what you say. Nonetheless, views in the Omen do not necessarily represent the views of anyone, anywhere, living or dead.

There is no Omen staff, save those positions of editor-in-chief and layout editor. To qualify for community service you must be a consistent contributor and help regularly with layout. Layout times (and such) will be discussed at our meetings. Meetings are held every Tuesday after release of an issue in the Bridge Cafe at 9PM. Everyone, everywhere, living or dead. should come.

The Omen loves you.

## Rediculou & Horrible

things I learned over the summer [part one]

## [ Living with Crack heads ]

Living with crack heads is never ideal. However if you find yourself in this situation there are some things you can do to alleviate the problems and entertain yourself\*. For the uninformed and blissfully innocent, crack head means someone who is addicted to crack cocaine. The stereotypes of these people are rampant on shows such as Dave Chapelle, or in bands such as Leftover Crack.

Crack use is made to seem humorous. Ironically, the crack heads I lived with were huge fans of Dave Chapelle and Leftover Crack. Clearly not the brightest crayons in the box.

\* Do not attempt this if you feel it would put you in any physical danger. only play this mind game with crack heads you know and love. Or ones you are bigger than. Also, don't live with crack heads. For the record this drug turns people into not people at all. If you knew them before, you don't know them now. They will steal from you and anyone else. They are paranoid, they are desperate, and they are annoying. Their drug dealers are worse. Not good people at all. And I'm against the drug war. These people are just fucked up.

Don't lend crack heads money, even if they say they aren't addicted or they quit. Don't feed them or support them in any other way because this just makes it easier for them to be addicted. They need to hit bottom. I'm not a doctor, but

vou don't

have to.

I learned this from experience. Crack p heads can be 18, or 58. I've seen both All the ones I've hung out with were not black (as many stereotypes suggest), they were upper middle class and white. Don't be blinded by your presumptions of who does this drug and who doesn't.

### [ How to get Crack Heads to Do the Dishes ]

- 1. First note, that generally crack heads will not do the dishes themselves I only know this to be true for male crack heads, but it may also be true for the female variety.
- 2. Wait for the crack heads to go out on a drug run. They will return home with crack rocks to smoke. Drug runs and stealing are likely the only reason they will leave the house/apartment.
- 3. While they are gone find their crack pipes. In my experience these are glass pipes with a little bit of metal brillo pad in one end. Unless you are dealing with experienced crack heads they will probably not be so paranoid as to hide their pipes well. Plus they are crack heads, and likely not smart enough to hide them well. Once you have found the crack pipes put them in a trash can full of disgusting trash (easy to find in a crack house).
- 4. When they return with a rock or two, they will want to smoke them. When they discover their pipes are missing they will ask if you have seen them.
- 5. What you need to do at this point is say something along the lines of "I might

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remember where your pipes are if you did the dishes." You need to maintain a fake innocence while still being suggestive enough that they understand that you indeed know where the crack pipes are. You could substitute some other house hold chore for doing the dishes.

- 6. Stand your ground and refuse to tell them where the pipes are until the dishes and any other chore are finished.
- When they done. them the bag full of garbage so they can dig through it themselves to get their precious little crack pipe.
- one, Crack heads Negative one. And now you can eat on clean dishes

#### How to Excite Crack Heads 1

1. Leave small of dried pineapple under

couches and on carpets in theirliving space- specifically where it is they smoke their crack. Bits of pineapple or other dried fruit can vaguely resemble crack. especially if small and more white than vellow.

- 2. Wait.
- 3. They will, when in a fervor, search the floor for bits of crack they may have missed.
- 4. On finding the dried pineapple a roar will go up from the crack crowd.

5. At this point it is especially effective for you to reach over and eat their "crack". It is important to only eat dried pineapple, and not actual crack.

6. Another option is to wait for them to smoke the dried pineapple (or other dried fruit) and laugh.

#### [ How to Frighten Crack Heads ]

1. Wait until they are currently smoking crack, or are in possession of a large

quantity.

hand For the record. 2. Either wait for a this drug turns people into funny noise outside, not people or pretend you hear at all one.

If you knew them before. you don't know them now. out a window facing They will steal from the street or the Score- You and anyone else. They are

paranoid, They are o desperate,

annoying.

front of the house/ building you are in. 4. Act panicked. 5. Tell them that

3. Stick your head

- a cop car, cop, or multiple cars are parked out front of your building, sitting across the street. walking up the stairs or something.
- 6. They will likely freak out, possibly scurrying quickly to hide drugs and drug paraphernalia.
- 7. Be amused. This is one of those classic "made you look" situations
- 8. Then move to a nicer house, with better roommates. Don't wait for them to getbetter, your life isn't long enough.
- 9. Later you might consider counseling or group therapy or something.

## Fland

I have a theory: men are upset because p they can't have babies. Let me elaborate.

Throughout history, men have proven to be ego-maniacs, sexist jerks, mean to women, in desperate search for feelings of manliness and jealous of women (mostly because they make babies).

There are theories that women's genitalia scares men because they are afraid of losing their penises. There are the old Greek myths about Zeus trying to find the male womb, which results in him storing children in weird places like his thigh and giving birth to them. There is the everyday crisis of women everywhere as they say "Why is he flailing around the universe not knowing what to do with himself?"

I would like to suggest that he is flailing around because he has a penis and he doesn't know what to do with it. It can help make babies, but he'll still feel inadequate. Not to mention that we have forgotten our biological roles to the extent that men don't even have to be around and take care of these babies, so they have even less of a chance of feeling useful.

Most importantly. I think that men are most afraid of women because we create the human race. We are the source of life and they aren't and they have often tried to suppress us and lock us up in rooms and make us afraid of our power, but when it comes down to it we are humoring men when they think that they have taken our power away because we create them.

So, I don't have a solution to this problem except that I'd like to tell men that it's okay. They have a purpose and women do too and we can each do our own without men constantly trying to put women down and without all this flailing.



to the Alumni Magazine

Dear Hampshire College,

Someone should tell Aaron Buchsbaum that it is lame to write articles for the OMEN after you graduate. Also, tell him to start updating his live journal again. My LJ friends page is lonely without his stories of his exploits on the Great Plains and incessant requests for my current weight. He is just playing into the regionalist notion that the fine people of Montana, or wherever the hell he is, are not Internet savvy. Perpetuating stereotypes? Bad Hampshire alum! Go build a soy diesel engine, post haste.

So Hampshire, how's it going? I hope year five of the Bush administration is treating you well. Any of you move to Canada yet? Just wondering, you know. I've been spending most of my time playing the GROW family of flash games and pondering whether a purchase of Sex, Drugs, and Cocoa Puffs is a good use of my finances. You would think the completely unobtrusive appearance in The O.C. would cinch it, but usually stuff I like shows up on The company as I See a Darkness and Source O.C. rather than vice versa.

Speaking of The O.C., who in the hell let Matt Pond PA butcher "In the Aeroplane Over the Sea?" Do people just assume Jeff Mangum is deceased because he hasn't released an album in a while? He just appeared with Olivia Tremor Control in NYC, for goodness sake. Better off he was dead, I suppose, then alive to hear Matt Pond PA's banal baroque pop tragically misapplied to one of the greatest songs ever written. I mean, John Darnielle had trouble with his cover of "Two-Headed Boy," and that's John FREAKIN' Darnielle.

Speaking of Neutral Milk Hotel, Pitchfork Media, home to sociological treatises and bludgeoning of the English

the Aeroplane Over the Sea and gave it a 10.0. Ignoring for a moment that the review is terrible, it was an exercise in superfluidity. They already reviewed the album when it was originally released and gave it an 8.8. The intervening years have cast the album as sort of a quasireligious experience for the indy music fan, so of course Pitchfork Media felt the need to reestablish their rock geek cred and give it the full monty. This

Speaking of the Omen, those fuckers are still publishing, aren't they?

places it alongside such distinguished Tags and Codes. I suppose if I was still Editor-in-Chief of the OMEN, I would be filling space at 1 AM reprinting shitty Pitchfork reviews instead of writing shitty off the cuff wrestling reviews. I don't think the content quality would suffer too much.

Speaking of the OMEN, those fuckers are still publishing aren't they? And I'm still submitting claptrap, aren't I? There is one good thing about being an alumni contributor- complete and utter freedom. I can write whatever I want now with no comeuppance. No more wandering into the student store and coming to a slow realization that several people in line with me probably hate me and everything I stand for. That's the

language, just reviewed the reissue of In current OMEN staff's problems now. Don't get me wrong- I love the OMEN staff (in a completely heteronormative way, mind you. Just ignore the phallic imagery.), but I have earned the right to be untouchable.

> Sure, I may not have a degree I can also conveniently use if I misplace the shiny thing that you put under microwave pizza to heat it evenly, but like all of us Hampshire sucked away four alcohol and drug addled years of my life, and six figures out of my parents bank account. (as an aside, I might as well have just spent the money to get membership in a super posh country club, the food and dating pool would have both been superior) Quite frankly. we have nothing left to give. And on that note I am quite sad that certain OMEN alums backed out of their promised point-counterpoint on the favored sexual position of the new president, for fear of ruining the quite implausible scenario wherein Hampshire might makes them trustees. Look ladies, you can weave all the baskets and marry all the Hielmsley scholars you want, the stain of OMENness prohibits you from ever being a trustee. I told you that when you signed on. Besides, you a Hampshire grad. You actually think your going to ever make enough money to impart the aura of trusteeness? Didn't think so.

Well, I just wanted to check in with my favorite group of overeducated and underemployed alums, and here I went and rambled on some. I should really get back to writing about autoimmune diseases and trolling West Wing message boards. Anyways, stay classy Hampshire.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey I. Paternostro



## An Open Letter to the Cereal Bins of SAGA

Dear Cereal Bins of SAGA, also known as Nature's Granary.

Greetings! First off the bat, I just want to say congratulations on your good job, lately. I really understand it can be rough trying to satisfy everyone at once with your selection, but I will emphasize that you've made the right decision in keeping up with Life (the cereal, and in general too I guess).

So just imagine for a sec what it must be like for us students. Coming here from all over the country and the world, each used to different eating habits, different cultural preferences, and different view of eating animals. Those of us confined to the dorms and forced to eat in the dining commons suddenly find our eating habits drastically adjusted. One night there could be the pleasant surprise of highly delicious cheese tortellini, the next could find us with a raised eyebrow at something that looks kind of orange and speckled. Basically, we have nothing consistently dependable, nothing that we can really count on to satisfy our hunger and dietary needs, nothing...

But wait! Hold the phone! There is E Another Option!

Envision the following scenario, cereal bins (I know this is a familiar sight to you, but bear with me): here comes a student - having already made both the vegetarian circuit and the carnivorous circuit, having already poured his raspberry lemonade with a mild fear he will have no meal with which to drink it, sheepishly walking past with only a piece of pie on his plate, beginning to shuffle out towards the tables - and there you are, cereal bins! Just look at your humble smile, your sidekicks the wooden bowls eagerly offering themselves, how could a hungry student turn you down?

The thing is, cereal bins, you provide pretty much the perfect substitute for a meal! Unlike pie, cake, or ice cream, your cereal manages to provide a few scattered nutrients while still delivering a satisfying eating experience.

Oh, and you're awesome for breakfast

Love, Molly McLeod





>> photo by Molly McLeod

FICTION, POETRY

SATIRE, AND

OTHER STUFF

July Fourth forged an individual From raped-culture and flames. 'Less-civilized' Learned the burnt-up village's visual, Reoccurring nightmare, as dreams disguised.

A Bleeding-Heart Us

Change of hearts? For the change of chains? Any I-have-a-dreamers can stand and get killed, Like priest pleasing whores have right to scan me. May dancing robots never be fulfilled.

What happens when all great social contracts Are third-world broke? Hate the 'State of Nature' When the global warming myth becomes fact, When I'm relieved of my precious stature...

Because I'm not sleeping with Lazarus Under my pillow, a bleeding-heart us.

the Omen says: It's Octobert And you know what that means... Time to try a new muffin recipe!

#### Ingredients:

2 cups unbleached flour 2/3rd cup white sugar 2 tsp baking powder 1/2 tsp salt 1c milk

1/2c butter, melted

1 egg, slightly beaten

1 tsp vanilla extract

1/2 tsp almond extract

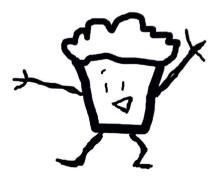
5 tbsp raspberry preserves

A quantity of sugar with which to top the muffins

#### Directions:

- 1. Prepare! Preheat oven to 400 degrees fahrenheit. Get out a muffin tin and line tin cups with foil muffin tin cup liners.
- 2. In large bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt, mixing well.
- 3. Add milk, butter, egg, vanilla, and almond extract. Mix until no dry dumps remain.
- 4. Spoon out the batter into the muffin cups. Fill the cups just less than half-way
- 5. Put a dollop of your raspberry preserves in the center of each muffin, then fill the rest of the way. Ensure that the jam does not touch the sides of the muffin tin.
- 6. Carefully fill the rest of the tins, sealing the preserves inside
- 7. Sprinkle sugar on them! Do it good.
- 8. Bake at 400 degrees for 12 to 20 minutes or until golden brown Cool for 5 minutes before consumption.





by: Conor Peterson [visiting Evergreen student]

"N-n-nol I can't do that," stammers the here in the first place? Isn't only a knight able po She has lain here dreaming for the last hundred years, but her beauty is unchanged squire. "I'm just the squire."

by time. Upon her brow is a circlet, framed by her golden blond hair, complimenting her perfect face. Her eyes, though closed, are the most enchanting blue. She is clad in a white silk gown, and clutches a single white rose to her chest. Light filters in from somewhere.

elegantly illuminating this masterpiece. "Excuse me, your Highness? Your Highness, wake up, please. Hello? Princess?" After a moment, the young squire timidly reaches forward and gently shakes the princess's shoulder. She awakens with a start.

"What! What is it?" she asks, her eyes darting around the room, finally coming to rest on the squire's cute, boyish face. She notices his dusty tunic and coat of arms. "Ooh," she groans. "You messed it up! You were supposed to kiss me awake." She pouts slightly. The squire stares, open mouthed. "Welll..?" the princess asks impatiently, "Are you going to kiss me, or what?"

The princess gasps, her blue eyes welling up slightly with tears. "Is the knight hurt?" she asks hurriedly. "Where is he?"

"He um." the squire says, awkwardly pushing hair out of his eyes, "he quit." The princess stares, open mouthed. "He gave me this note to give to you." The squire hands

"Dear Princess" she reads aloud

"Had a drink with the Black Knight, & we talked. I saw a side of chivalry I've never seen before. I also saw a new side of the "Wicked" Witch, what a gal. You can take care of yourself.

Love Unvirtuously. White Knight"

The princess crumples the note and hurls it across the room, "The nerve of him! Arch. Men are such assholes." She looks over at the squire. "No offense. Say, how did you get in to get in here?

"I hadn't thought of that," admits the squire. "There were some trolls and a dragon, but I got past them alright, I guess." He examines a messy tear in his funic

"Do you um.," the princess says, biting her lip, "do you want to come sit down with me?" She pats the bed next to her. "Who really needs the White Knight, anyway?" She starts undoing the clasp holding her gown

"You know, I should really be going," the squire says nervously. "I'm no knight. I'm not even supposed to be here." He starts backing toward the door.

"Come here, kiddo," she says forcefully, gripping his tunic, "You're knight enough

The squire audibly gulps in a way that suggests he is about to lose his youthful naiveté, as he is pulled down onto the bed.





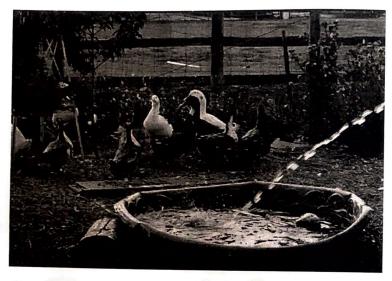
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>> photo by Molly McLeod

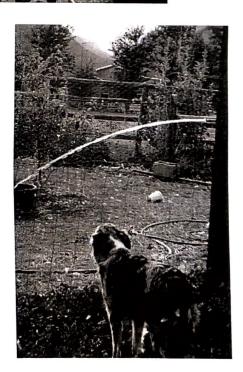
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Birthplace:

Grrr.

New Haven, Connecticut

Major Achievements:

Once managed to catch a squirrel.

Once managed to dress himself

Favorite Food:

The crunchy kind

may choke on the crunchy kind

Drinks out of toilet?

Only when the seat is left up

can lift up the seat himself

Looks to for inspiration:

Anything with opposable thumbs

dear old dad

Extent of influence:

once ran around the neighborhood before he was caught Whatever Cheney lets him get away with

In his destructive moments:

Tears up pillows

Starts wars with small countries

Man's best friend?

Yes

Debatable.

Secret Plan:

Doom for all mankind

Lollipops.

the**omen · 1**3

october 14, 2005

# Journal Entries from Elementary School Children

submitted by: Jacob Lefton

## What I Collect

"I like to collect happiness from myself to give to people. It's nice because I make people feel good inside and happy. I'm always collecting it. Kind of almost every day. It inspired me by people being sad and down. :( I've collected a lot more than 1,000 and nothing can stop me from it. It's actually fun because then they become a friend to me. Happiness is what I've been collecting all my life. This is what I like to collect and what I collect."

# A Conversation with the President

One day I got a letter from President Bush saying, "You are invited to my house." So I went to his house.

- "Hello Mr. Bush."
- "Hello Margaret."
- "So what do you want to talk about?"
- "Well I disagree with the age of having to vote.
- "Well 10 is a reasonable age but some 10 year olds are not mature.
- "Yes I understand but lots of 10 year olds are very mature. I'm not 10 but I'm still very mature.
- "Margaret, Margaret there are some things that should stay the same and this is just one of those things."
- "No you're wrong Mr. Bush this is one thing that needs to be changed. It needs to be changed because you grown-ups always leave kids out of things and sometimes I think you guys think we only care about dolls and video games. Well you're wrong because us kids know about Iraq, the tsunami, September 11th, and a lot of other things."
- "I understand that Margaret but I simply cannot change that because I like the voting age."
- "Well you know what Mr. Bush this is over but when I become president things are going to change."

Where does one begin with a story? I voice! suppose my first convensation with Petranot know why I am telling you all this, to me?" be perfectly honest, seeing as how you are a total stranger, but for some reason I feel that if I can still confide in anyone, I can confide in you. I first met her near the end of the Great Wat, in an army encampment. The Empire had endlessly repeated that they had conquered the world, but at that time, I supposed that the Empire must have been lying.

The first day in the encampment came as a shock, awaking to the sound of strange tongues I was unable to comprehend. Two persons stood above me. The first one was a haggard dwarf with long, ratted hair and a bushy, red beard. He was small of stature and stank of tobacco and filth. The second one was a beautiful young elvish woman. She reminded me of Eleanor, my wife, without the obvious Tuelan complexion. I had seen a portrait of Eleanor's Sylvan mother, so I knew that she must be a sylvan elf because of the long, green hair braided behind her. She was tall and had very light skin, which was quite a shock considering that I was accustomed to viewing the darker skin of Tuelans. The dwarf said something and began to laugh. At least I assumed it to be laughter, it sounded more to me as if he was afflicted with a cough. The elvish woman signed and began speaking to the dwarf in a domineering tone. The dwarf just laughed but even so the news still saddened me. again and went off on his way.

"You look as though you have been through a lot. We thought that you were of the Army of the United Alliance" dead," she said in Tuclan. I was surprised. I had not expected that someone

"You were not the only one. I thought is as good of a time to begin as any. I do: I was dead myself. How did you find

> "We found you along one of the side roads near Dhirjan. I noticed that you were not wearing a soldier's uniform and you were in rather poor shape so our unit picked your body up for burial, but the war should be over in a few months. it appears that you are well again."

said, laughing wealdy. She smiled in return.

"What is your name?"

"My name is Tajere Alleux. And

"My name is Petra. What area of Tuela do you come from, Tajere?"

"I come from the capital city, Illur. It wasn't always called that, though."

"You are a long way from the capital, Tajere. How did you get to be here?"

"I was a prisoner in the Vondur dungeons for eight months. They had recently pulled me out so they could execute me. However, when I reached the surface, the sunlight affected me so much that I fainted, so I assume they left me for dead."

"Vondur? You were imprisoned in Vondur?" She paused for a second and whispered to me that I was the only prisoner left alive. The news took a few minutes to sink in. I knew none of the other inmates and had no illusions about the fact that execution awaited them all,

"Where are you from?" I asked her.

"I am a member of the 120th Brigade

"The United Alliance?"

"We are a coalition of people from outside of Tuela would be so well versed Zimria: Dwarves, Elves, Gnomes, and in Tuclan, and with such an exquisite. Men of all races and nations united to

fight Arxantes and the Empire." Dwarves fighting side by side with Elves? I would not have believed it if I had not seen a dwarf in the room just a moment ago.

"The fact that I am here; does this mean that it is almost over? That you are winning?" I continued

"Yes, we are close to the capital and but-" She paused and swallowed hard. "I do not know if I would say that," I "-I don't think that Zimria will ever recover from this war. I know I will not."

> "I have no doubt that my people have caused much anguish to the world. I apologize, but hopefully things will get better once this war has ended and we can all return to our homes," I said, trying to put a smile on my face. Petra wiped a tear from her eye and returned the smile. Then her eyes lit up and her tone of voice changed. She always had this strange mixture of seriousness and humor about her.

"Please forgive me for being so inhospitable! You look like a walking skeleton and I have not even offered you any food!" Her voice then changed and she began to speak slower.

"If you should be in need of anything, you only need to let me know." And with that, she scurried out of the tent to retrieve my food.

It took four months for the Army of the United Alliance, as they called themselves to capture Illur. The camp was fascinating to me because I had never seen anyone from another race in person. The inhabitants of the camp, however, did not share my interest. They had seen many Tuelans before and they hated them. The original unit that had picked me up was kind enough, but the other units I ran into only associated me with the enemy they had been fighting

for years. During my time in the camp, Petra and I spoke frequently about our war experiences.

"Why did you resist the Empire? Almost every Tuelan I have spoken to has been fanatically loyal to the Empire. What made it different for you?" Petra asked me once.

"At first I supported the Empire. Before Arxantes came there was much fighting between rival warlords and many of us had grown tired of the constant warfare. I first had misgivings when Arxantes sent our army to fight against the Sylvans. I had a wife named Eleanor and her mother was a Sylvan Elf. Because of this, the people in my neighborhood began to grow suspicious of Eleanor because of her Sylvan ancestry. They began to call her a spy, a half-breed, a traitor, and so on. We tried to dye her hair brown with some of the bark from the area, but it was no use. You could still see the green in her hair. As the war went on, the local authorities started harassing us as well. Illverks would show up at our door everyday and destroy our property and beat my wife. Finally, we could take no more and we moved away from Illur to the countryside. However, even there we were not safe. I can still remember the day. Eleanor went out to the market to buy some fruits. Soon it was dark and she still was not back. I paced back and forth in agony, waiting for her to arrive and fearing the worst. And then...an illverk appeared at my door and informed me that Eleanor had been murdered."

Tajere then broke off from his narrative. His face cringed, like that of a small child who has been struck for reasons he cannot comprehend. His lips struggled to convey the experience. When he tried, the words would flutter away like parchment in the wind, just beyond his straining fingertips.

"I moved back to Illur after that and tried to forget about the ghastly scene I

had witnessed. However, a few months atrocities." afterwards, I received an anonymous letter. It told me that the Government had murdered Eleanor and told me to meet the author of the letter at a certain home. I did and that is how I learned about the Resistance."

"You believed the writers of the letter?" Petra interrupted.

"I believed that even if the Government had not directly murdered Eleanor

I have no doubt that my people have caused much anguish to the world. I apologize, but hopefully things will get better once this war has ended and we can all return to our homes...

that they were responsible for creating the climate in which she was killed. I met a man named Relaiah and we created a small Resistance cell in Illur and began targeting Government leaders for assassination." I laughed, looking back on it with disbelief.

"I know it is hard to believe that we were foolish enough to think we could bring the Empire down by killing a few petty officials. It was not more than a few weeks before we were all rounded up to be sent to Vondur."

I then put on a fake smile and said, "And that is how I ended up in Vondur when so many of my neighbors ended up in the Army, committing horrible

"How did you survive in Vondur for so long? What drove you on?"

"Hatred. Pure hatred. I hated the Empire for killing Eleanor, for killing Relajah, for torturing me and everyone else who stood in their way. I hated Sere and the Baron, hated even just looking at their repulsive faces. I hated Arxantes and Illur and even Tuela itself. Hatred is what kept me alive all those years, but what will keep me alive now?"

"I know well the feelings you speak of. When the Empire's army first invaded our village, my father went off to fight them and never returned. I was fortunate. My father's good friend, Thyri, was able to lead a few of us out of our village to the main Sylvan regiment. The rest of my family was not so lucky. Even Thyri died during that war, and so did everyone else I ever knew. The Empire has razed nearly all of our villages. I do not even know how many Sylvans are still alive! Where will I go when this is all done? Where can I go? I remember hating all Tuelans for what they did to us," then her voice calmed down, "That is why I am glad I have met you. Tragic things do not happen for any reason. I am sure that this is all part of Elohim's plan."

"Yes, but where will you go now? Back to your village?" She slowly shook

"Going back to my village won't bring back my family or the Sylvan soldiers that were killed during the war, but it will bring back the memories. There is no place for me there."

"Then where will you go?"

"I'm a soldier now, have been most of my life. I suppose I will go wherever my commander needs me to go." It was dark now and the candle was almost completely melted.

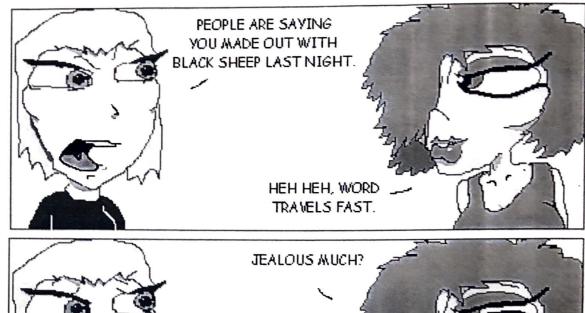
"Well, good night, Tajere. Tomorrow we will enter Illur and this war will finally have ended."

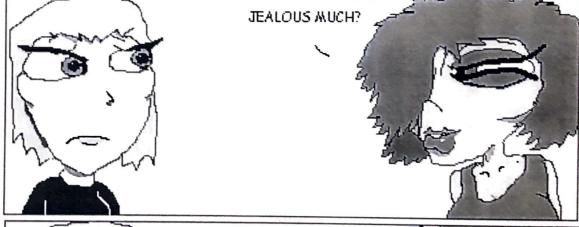


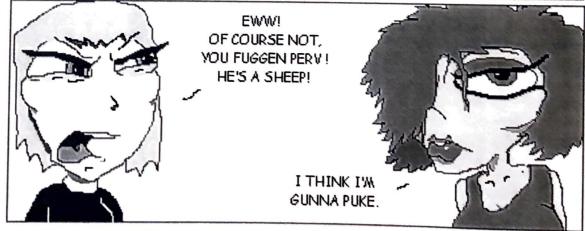
## SPECIAL OMEN EDITION

# BLACK SHEEP & FROG

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